

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /147 W

----- 128933

R 260543Z JUL 74

FM AMCONSUL KARACHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8262

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK, AF

SUBJECT: BHUTTO SUGGESTS TALKS WITH AFGHANISTAN

REF: KARACHI 1547 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ON THE FIRST DAY OF HIS BALUCHISTAN TOUR, PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO PUBLICLY OFFERED TO NEGOTIATE OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES WITH AFGHANISTAN, IF THAT COUNTRY ABANDONED ITS CLAIMS ON PAKISTANI TERRITORY. SPEAKING IN PATHAN-DOMINATED BORDER TOWNS, BHUTTO REPORTEDLY TOOK A LESS BELLIGERENT LINE TOWARD KABUL WHILE REITERATING NATIONALIST, ANTI-WALI KHAN THEMES. END SUMMARY

2. TRAVELING BY HELICOPTER, BHUTTO BEGAN HIS BALUCHISTAN TOUR JULY 24 WITH A MORNING SPEECH IN CHANAN, A PATHAN TOWN ON THE AFGHAN BORDER. HE REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED ISLAMABAD'S WILLINGNESS TO HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH KABUL IF THE GOA DROPPED ITS "PREPOSTEROUS" CLAIMS TO CERTAIN PAKISTANI TERRITORIES. IN AN UNSCHEDULED SPEECH IN PISHIN HE WENT FURTHER, OFFERING TO NEGOTIATE A SIMLA-STYLE AGREEMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN TO PRECLUDE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF EITHER COUNTRY BY THE

OTHER. BHUTTO REPORTEDLY REPEATED HIS OFFER OF A BILATERAL PACT IN HIS LATE AFTERNOON ADDRESS IN FORT SANDEMAN.

3. THIS APPARENTLY LESS STRIDENT TONE AND MORE FORTHCOMING POSTURE TOWARD AFGHANISTAN WAS OFFSET BY BHUTTO'S JIBES AT AFGHANISTAN. BHUTTO COMPARED PAKISTANI DEMOCRACY WITH AFGHAN REPRESSION, NOTING THAT THE GOA COULD NOT SPEAK OF A REFERENDUM AMONG PATHANS WHILE UZBEKS, TURKMEN, AND HAZARIS IN AFGHANISTAN WERE DENIED DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS. PRESIDENT DAUD, BHUTTO OBSERVED, HAD CELEBRATED ONE YEAR IN POWER BUT REMAINED SILENT ABOUT ELECTIONS. DIFFICULT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN HAD SWELLED THE NUMBER OF AFGHAN EMIGRANTS TO PAKISTAN, BHUTTO ALLEGED. PLAYING ON NATIONALIST SENTIMENTS, BHUTTO AVERRED THAT PAKISTAN WAS AGAIN STRONG ENOUGH TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST ANY AFGHAN/INDIAN THREATS. "AMIDS LOUD APPLAUSE" HE PROCLAIMED THAT THE FRONTIER AND BALUCHISTAN WOULD ALWAYS REMAIN PART OF PAKISTAN. PRESS REPORTS AVAILABLE HERE INDICATE THAT BHUTTO ALSO MENTIONED GOP-FINANCED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN BORDER AREAS AND WAS WELL RECEIVED THROUGHOUT WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN AN EXHAUSTING DAY.

4. BHUTTO REFERRED INDIRECTLY TO NAP LEADER WALI KHANTAS AN AGENT OF AFGHANISTAN AND INDIA WHO HAD NEVER CRITICIZED EITHER COUNTRY BUT HAD NOT HESITATED TO SLANDER THE GREAT JINNAH AS A "SECESSIONIST". WALI KHAN, HE NOTED, SPOKE FOR PATHANS WHEN IN THE FRONTIER AND FOR BALUCH WHEN IN BALUCHISTAN -- AN OBVIOUS EFFORT TO SOW DISCORD BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS. BHUTTO DENIED THAT BALUCHISTAN WAS "ABLAZE" AS ALLEGED BY THE NAP.

5. COMMENT: THERE MAY WELL BE LESS HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE. BHUTTO'S SIMLA-LIKE PACT OFFER, WHICH WAS GIVEN FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE IN THE GOP-CONTROLLED KARACHI PRESS, WAS HEAVILY CONDITIONED. IT SEEMS FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF KARACHI THAT, IF NOT A PURE PROPAGANDA PLOY, THE OFFER COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MADE WITH MUCH EXPECTATION OF SERIOUS RESPONSE BY KABUL AT THE PRESENT TIME. EXCEPT FOR THE LESS STRIDENT TONE TOWARD AFGHANISTAN

(WHICH WAS NOT REFLECTED IN REPORTING BY THE URDU DAILY "JANG"), BHUTTO'S SPEECHES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN PRETTY STANDARD FARE SO FAR.

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